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AUTHOR Sagaria, Mary Ann D.; And Others
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ABSTRACT

The development of a graduate survey at Ohio Dominican College is described, and guidelines for implementing a graduate survey are provided. The survey assessed student characteristics, activities during college, endeavors after graduation, and attitudes, goals, and values. Project goals included: developing a graduate survey that could also be used for self-study for an accreditation review; evaluating whether the college is accomplishing its mission; and providing a management tool to evaluate the effectiveness of specific programs. In addition to forming a management subcommittee to organize the project, additional subcommittees that were established focused on the survey, communication, implementation, and drafting. Also considered are a needs assessment, the survey development process, and a pilot administration of the questionnaire. Guidelines for conducting a graduate study cover: sampling, survey mailing and followup procedures, project costs, and possible benefits from research. Information is included on estimated printing and mailing costs for small and large survey booklets, as well as possible uses of information derived from a graduate survey. Appendices include the management plan for conducting a survey and the survey questionnaire. (SW)

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STUDYING THE IMPACT OF COLLEGE ON STUDENTS: PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH

An Action Research Project for

Ohio Dominican College

Mary Ann D. Sagaria
Project Director

Philip E. Winger
Project Director

Sandra C. Burkhart
Jay D. Chopp
Scott R. Horton
Susan Konves
Kathy J. Krajnak
Irene M. Mytro
Susan C. Pollack
Rodger C. Smith
Gary Michael Timko
Sharon D. Vaughters
Teresa E. West

Ohio State University

August 27, 1985

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Mary Ann D. Sagaria

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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE REPORT

* Student outcomes data are important requisites for institutional planning, developing student retention and recruitment strategies, evaluating the effectiveness of institutional programs, and preparing for accreditation reviews.

* A project team consisting of a faculty member and graduate students from The Ohio State University College of Education worked with administrators of the Ohio Dominican College to design and pilot test a questionnaire to determine the impact of the College on graduates.

* The 101 item survey contains objective information regarding background characteristics, activities during college, and endeavors after graduation. Also, it contains subjective data about topics such as satisfaction with college; critical thinking and expression; interpersonal skills; and values, goals and philosophy.

* Twelve respondents completed the pilot survey. The final draft of the survey included in this report contains revisions based upon comments and suggestions from respondents and college administrators. Reaction of the graduates to the questionnaire was very favorable.

* In order to determine the impact of Ohio Dominican College on its recent graduates a procedure is presented for conducting a mail survey of graduates. Specifically, 935 graduates should be surveyed by mail questionnaire during Spring 1986.

* The cost of materials and professional printing for such a study will be approximately $1256 or $2355. The two estimates reflect different specifications for the questionnaire such as size and layout which may significantly affect the decision of a graduate to respond.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report has been prepared as part of a project conducted by graduate students in the Higher Education and Adult Education program at The Ohio State University for the development of a study of the impact of Ohio Dominican College on its students. The report provides a description of a prototype management model developed by the project team to design a survey instrument and to prepare a set of recommendations that will enable the College to conduct a large scale study of its graduates.

We are pleased to have been able to provide a service to officials of Ohio Dominican College and to have had a rich field experience. The College administrators' commitment to excellence and their willingness to share information about the institution provided an ideal learning environment in which we could apply and test our classroom knowledge about research methods, higher education organizations, and student outcomes.

We appreciate the assistance and guidance of Sister Suzanne Uhrhane and Mr. James Sagona. Their comments on the draft surveys and ideas were especially helpful. Ms. Toni Hale also provided important data. Special thanks also go to Ms. Sheryl Hanson for her editorial assistance with the report and to Ms. Kathy Shonkwiler who typed multiple drafts and revisions of the questionnaire.

Mary Ann D. Sagaria
Assistant Professor
Department of Educational Policy
and Leadership
The Ohio State University

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INTRODUCTION

Higher education administrators, faced with declining numbers of college-aged students, increasing competition for those students, and shrinking institutional resources, have become increasingly concerned with assessing the impact of their programs upon students. Although the benefits of measuring student outcomes are numerous, four stand out as salient: contributions to institutional planning, development of student retention and recruitment strategies, evaluation of the effectiveness of programs within the institution, and preparation for accreditation reviews (Ewell, 1983). By using student outcomes data, higher education institutions can benefit from identifying both what they do well and what they do that could be improved.

In recent years many administrators and faculty at colleges and universities have become involved in conducting research on student outcomes data. One such study was completed by Ohio Dominican College in 1977. Conducted by the Office of Institutional Research at the College, it enabled Ohio Dominican College to assess the impact of the college experience on its graduates and alumni and to evaluate the quality of its programs. The study also provided data for the regional accrediting body, the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

Now, eight years later the leadership of the college, committed to providing a quality undergraduate experience for its students is again seeking information about student needs and satisfaction. The present effort, however, is a collaborative effort in which persons outside the College, a faculty member and graduate students from The Ohio State Uni-

versity, are working with administrators of Ohio Dominican College to undertake a self-study on student outcomes. Consequently, the metamorphosis of the study is more elaborate and its accompanying documentation more thorough than that associated with most single institution efforts to study the impact of college on students.

The following pages present (1) an account of how the Ohio State project team developed a survey of college graduates and (2) specific information necessary to conduct a successful study of college graduates.

Three goals guided the project. The first goal was for the project team to develop a graduate survey instrument for Ohio Dominican College which could later be used to generate self-study data for the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools Accreditation review in 1987-88. Such self-studies are important because accrediting bodies "are increasingly interested in assessing the degree to which institutional activities meet student needs . . . . Indeed, some accrediting bodies have begun to tie evidence of outcomes performance to accreditation standards" (Ewell, 1983, p. 49). The second goal of the project team was to develop a study which would generate results to assist Ohio Dominican College in assessing how well it is accomplishing its mission. Student outcomes data can be used to assess the extent to which elements of institutional mission are being attained. The third goal of the project team was to provide Ohio Dominican College with a management tool which may be used over time and can be adapted by the institution to evaluate the effectiveness of specific programs.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The initial step in the development of the project was the formation of a management subcommittee to organize the project. In order to assure development of the survey, as requested by Ohio Dominican College, a management plan was created. This plan included a comprehensive list of project tasks and a timeline through which the survey development, pilot study implementation, survey revision, and final report would be completed. July 31 was established as the target completion date (see Appendix A). The management subcommittee also established four additional subcommittees to carry out the plan. These subcommittees and their primary responsibilities were:

SURVEY SUBCOMMITTEE - This committee reviewed current survey literature and developed and pilot tested the "Ohio Dominican College Graduate Survey." The subcommittee carefully integrated material from the higher education and social science literatures, information from records and publications of the College, and the expressed needs of representatives of the Ohio Dominican community to conceptualize and design the survey.

COMMUNICATION SUBCOMMITTEE - With the help of the Ohio Dominican College Alumni Office, this subcommittee coordinated the implementation of two pilot surveys and conveyed information from participants to the Survey Subcommittee for further revisions to the questionnaire.

IMPLEMENTATION SUBCOMMITTEE - The Implementation Subcommittee reviewed current literature appropriate to correct implementation of mail surveys and determined the human and physical resources necessary to conduct a large scale survey of graduates. The committee also made recommendations for implementing the survey and effectively using the the student outcomes information which would emerge from the questionnaire.

DRAFTING SUBCOMMITTEE - The role of the Drafting Subcommittee was to integrate the efforts of the individual subcommittees into a written document and an oral presentation which would adequately convey a sense of both the process and product of the project team.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

To understand and meet the needs of the Ohio Dominican administration and ground the development of the survey in the context of the institution, the Project Team met with a number of College officials to solicit their views about content relevant to the survey of graduates. The group met with Sister Suzanne Uhrhane, Director of Institutional Research; Mr. George Hertrich, Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs; Mr. James Sagona, Dean of Admissions and Students; and Ms. Toni Hale, Assistant to the Director of the Alumni Office. These interviews suggested that individuals held a diverse set of views on the information that should be acquired through the survey. Among the topics recommended to be studied were:

- graduates' use of and satisfaction with college services and student organizations;

- graduates' needs and perceptions of the Alumni Association and its programs and services;
- graduates' assessment of the Humanities curriculum;
- an analysis of the Weekend College;
- and the impact of the international students on the Ohio Dominican College campus;

Although each of these topics contributed significantly to the practical grounding of the survey, it was the stated mission of the College as a Dominican Catholic and liberal arts institution which was most salient in shaping the content of the questionnaire. The Dominican emphasis on teaching and service, the nature of the curriculum, and the concern for the development of the whole student, reflect the search for truth. This guiding principle of the College, embodied in its Mission Statement was the common theme articulated by all officials of the College with whom the project members met, and shaped both the content of the survey questions and the process used by the Project Team.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In addition to the knowledge and insights which the administrators of the College provided the Project Team, the team reviewed the rich literature on student outcomes research to strengthen the foundations upon which the survey would be developed. Two primary works greatly influenced the thinking of the project team and the development of the survey. The first was the College Outcome Measures Project of the American College Testing Program (ACT). The ACT information on satisfaction; abilities, skills, and competencies; and personal growth provided much of the basis for sections of the "Ohio Dominican College Graduate Survey." Also, a major

portion of the Occupational Information section of the ACT survey was adapted for the "Ohio Dominican College Graduate Survey."

The second primary work which influenced the development of the survey was Measuring the Outcomes of College by C. Robert Pace (1979). To generate many of the content areas and specific questions contained in the "Ohio Dominican College Graduate Survey," the Survey Subcommittee used Pace's list of student outcomes measures which included:

- Occupational Level of Graduates
- Income
- Job Satisfaction
- Relationship of Job to Major Field of Study
- Vocational Relevance of College
- Satisfaction with College and Attitude Toward College
- Political Activities
- Cultural Activities and Interests
- Critical Thinking and Expression
- Breadth of Knowledge
- Interpersonal Skills
- Values, Goals, and Philosophy (pp. 96-105)

In addition, the group incorporated the following desirable outcomes of the college experience which Pace discussed:

- clarification of one's philosophy, ethics, and morality
- responsible citizenship
- esthetic sensitivity
- tolerance
- appreciation of other cultures

- self-directed learning
- understanding science and technology
- vocational training (p. 110)

Thus, the ACT Survey and work of C. Robert Pace provided the foundation for developing the content of the "Ohio Dominican College Graduate Survey."

SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

In addition to developing the content of the mail survey, the wording of questions, ordering of statements, and general sequencing of the content areas received careful attention. Substantial research has shown that these issues do significantly influence how materials are perceived by potential recipients and their likelihood to participate in a mail survey (Dillman, 1978). Therefore, the Survey Subcommittee closely monitored these factors during the survey's development.

The Survey Subcommittee sought to ground the needs of the administrators of Ohio Dominican College in the theoretical directions found in the literature on student outcomes and survey research. Again, it is important to note the primacy of the Mission Statement of the College in all aspects of the institution such as the curriculum and student services. Its application to the general workings of the College help to support the general nature of the instrument developed by the Survey Subcommittee. While it was impossible to include all of the areas and topics suggested for consideration by Ohio Dominican College administrators, the Survey Subcommittee made a conscious effort to include special interests in

questions throughout the survey. At the same time, the subcommittee attempted to address the entire educational experience of Ohio Dominican College graduates.

A general, broad-based survey was created which many administrators and faculty of the College should be able to use. Moreover, the information gathered can serve as a foundation for the gathering of additional office-specific information. Given the constraints of length, user time, readability, and the need to gather usable information it was felt that the more broad-based, general student outcomes survey should be developed rather than a more comprehensive instrument.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILOT STUDY

After writing and revising several versions of each section of the survey, a draft of the entire questionnaire was prepared and revised. The revised questionnaire was then administered in a pilot study.

Working from a list of six names supplied by the Alumni Office, the Communication Subcommittee contacted by telephone three graduates of Ohio Dominican who agreed to complete the survey in their homes and provide the committee with reactions. Interviews with these individuals provided a wealth of valuable information which was incorporated into the next revision of the survey.

Working with a list of thirty-two names provided by the Alumni Office, the Communication Subcommittee established an objective of administering the second pilot survey to ten to twelve individuals. Eventually, nine persons participated in two different administrations of the second pilot

survey. After completing the questionnaire, participants were interviewed as a group. Their reactions to the survey were tape recorded for use by the Survey Subcommittee in making further revisions to the survey.

In the first administration of the second version of the questionnaire, four out of six participating graduates went to the Ohio Dominican campus to complete the survey. The inability of several volunteers to participate caused the Communication Subcommittee to seek additional participants to achieve the desired sample size. However, no further volunteers were found who could complete the survey at the scheduled times. At the second administration, five of six volunteers went to the campus to complete the survey.

The total number of persons (twelve) completing the pilot surveys was considered adequate for testing and refining the questionnaire. It was felt that the use of a larger pilot sample would diminish the potential pool of graduates available to participate in the official "Ohio Dominican College Graduate Survey" in the Spring of 1986.

Two especially noteworthy issues were raised by the respondents after completing the survey. First, several volunteers expressed reservations about being identified by name on the survey. They indicated that they would respond more candidly if their names were not on the questionnaire and if anonymity were assured. A second issue was the importance of the personal nature of the educational experience at Ohio Dominican College. Having become accustomed as students to this "personal touch", the graduates felt that a very personal cover letter should accompany the mailed survey in order to encourage the greatest response rate.

The Survey Subcommittee incorporated these two suggestions and other

recommendations concerning the wording of questions into a revised version of the "Ohio Dominican College Graduate Survey" (Appendix B). Then Sister Suzanne Uhrhane and Mr. Sagona met with the subcommittee to discuss the questionnaire and make suggestions and additional changes. Once again, the Survey and Implementation Subcommittees used this information to further refine the questionnaire and the recommendations for its implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONDUCTING A STUDY OF GRADUATES

The intent of this section is to serve as a blueprint for implementing a survey of graduates. The recommended procedures presented are derived from scholarship on research methods in the social sciences, knowledge from Ohio Dominican College, and Professor Sagaria's expertise regarding survey research. Topics addressed include sampling, survey mailing and follow-up procedures, costs for the project, and possible benefits from the research.

Sample

The recommended sample unit for the study is all alumni who reside in the United States who graduated from 1978 through 1984. According to lists provided by the Alumni Office there are 953 individuals meeting these two criteria. Persons residing outside of the U.S. are excluded because officials at the college are currently involved with a project to solicit information from them regarding their views about Ohio Dominican College. Also, there are serious difficulties associated with implementing a survey using both domestic and international postal services. Locating graduates outside the United States is more difficult than within the

U.S. Different mailing schedules also must be developed and there is a greater probability of losing the survey materials sent outside of the U.S. than within the country. In addition, this sample unit has the advantage of including the vast majority of individuals who graduated since the last survey of graduates undertaken by Ohio Dominican College in 1977.

The sample unit of 953 graduates is a manageable number for a mail survey. Also, it assumes representativeness of the recent graduating classes and responses from the entire cohort will serve as useful benchmark data which could be augmented with information from future graduates to establish patterns over time. Most importantly, by surveying the entire sample unit officials of the college will have a rich data source that will lend itself to analyzing the responses in many ways. Analyses by graduating class and major or graduating class and place of student residence are two such possibilities.

When developing the sampling unit, it is important that the sample does not contain duplications of names of graduates. This might occur if a student graduated with more than one degree from Ohio Dominican College between the cut off dates of 1978 and 1984. Such duplications must be deleted from the survey list to avoid offending graduates with multiple mailings, miscalculating the response rate, and unnecessary costs.

Mailing and Follow-up Procedures

After the list of the sample unit has been generated, mailing procedures should follow the Total Design Method (T.D.M.). This describes the step-by-step details of how to conduct successful mail surveys. It offers specific guidance on how to carry out a mail survey (Dillman, 1978,

p. viii) and should enable individuals at Ohio Dominican College to successfully conduct their own survey.

The recommended design for the study of graduates consists of an initial mailing and three follow-up mailings. This design should double the response rates normally attained by mail surveys of special groups of college-educated respondents (Dillman, 1978, p. 180). If the College adheres closely to the recommended procedures outlined here and the Total Design Method, it is reasonable to expect an overall return rate of 70 percent. For Ohio Dominican College this percentage represents approximately 650 graduates.

The initial mailing to the graduates should consist of a type set and printed survey in booklet form, a return envelope with a first class stamp, and a personalized cover letter. The survey in its present form (see Appendix B) is scientifically sound and should be understood by graduates. Content is, of course, the most salient characteristic of the questionnaire. However, other aspects such as size, color, and quality of paper, and the cover design and layout may significantly affect the graduate's decision to respond.

Because the mail questionnaire, more than any other type of questionnaire (such as a face to face interview or telephone survey) must be its own advocate, the overall initial impact of the questionnaire must be to provide immediate and positive answers to concerns over its importance, difficulty and length (Dillman, 1978, p. 120). Therefore, it is strongly recommended that visually observable characteristics of mailed questionnaires that have been proven successful be incorporated in preparing surveys to be sent to all recent graduates of the college.

The questionnaire should be printed as a booklet in a photographically reduced form and reproduced on off-white paper by a printing method that provides quality similar to the original typed copy. The survey should also be designed to form a 6 1/4 x 12 1/4 inch booklet to fit well in mailing and return envelopes (Dillman, 1978, p. 121). Other considerations regarding specifications for the questionnaire may be found in Mail and Telephone Surveys by Don A. Dillman.

A personal cover letter should accompany the questionnaire. It should reinforce Ohio Dominican's tradition of personal interest in students and commitment to quality education, explain the importance of the graduate's participation, and the purpose of the study. The name, address, and salutation of the graduate should be individually typed onto the letter on the business stationary of the college. Letters should have a real signature. The follow-up letters should be prepared in the same manner as the first cover letter and should articulate the value of the participation of the alumnus or alumna and how the acquired information will benefit the College.

After the initial mailing is completed, certain follow-up procedures must be utilized in order to obtain the highest possible return rate. First, a tracking sheet should be developed to monitor the return rate of the surveys, to identify any complications that may occur early in the returns, and to allow identification of non-respondents for follow-up mailings. Tracking is made possible by using a coding number on each copy of the survey.

The second procedure involves the first follow-up mailing to graduates. A postcard should be sent to all persons in the sample one week

after the initial mailing reminding them of the survey and the importance of its completion and return to Ohio Dominican College. They should also be thanked for their participation because many may have already completed and returned the survey.

Finally, a second follow-up should be mailed three weeks after the first mailing to those graduates in the survey group who have not yet responded. It should consist of a letter again stressing the importance of completing the survey, another copy of the survey, and a return envelope. In the event that a graduate misplaces or did not receive the original copy, he or she will then have survey materials available to complete.

It should be noted that a successful return rate can be positively influenced by the timing of the initial and follow-up mailings. It is recommended that all mailings be made late in the work week so that mail is received early in the week when persons are most likely to respond.

In order for the survey to be carried out in a timely and effective manner, the responsibility for the implementation of the survey should be placed with individuals who can make the project their first priority. Survey projects of this magnitude typically demand greater time and effort than college employees with full appointments are able to commit. Therefore, it is recommended that a small project team or graduate intern be employed and provided with office space, telephone access, and needed secretarial support for the duration of the project.

It is also recommended that the initial mailing of the survey be made in March of 1986 to avoid the Christmas holiday mail period and to allow for completion of the study by the end of the academic year. The survey

implementation is estimated to require 75 working days (these should not be confused with actual hours of work) excluding the time needed to hire personnel. An additional 10-15 working days may be required. Individuals who will work with the project should, therefore, be selected by the first week of February, 1986 in order to complete the study by early June, 1986. More specific information regarding the recommended time line for the research appears in Appendix F. A contingency plan should also be developed to take into account potential problems and delays.

Costs

Other than personnel expenditures, the postage and printing of the survey and accompanying materials are the two major costs which will be incurred by this project. It is recommended that first class postage be used throughout the course of the project to further reduce expenses by ensuring priority handling by the postal service as well as to communicate to the graduates the significance of the survey. Business reply envelopes should be used for the return of the survey which will reduce costs, since no postage is lost if the graduate does not respond.

The follow-up mailings account for a significant portion of the total cost of the project. These expenses can be kept to a minimum by using "reminder" postcards (rather than letters) for the first follow-up mailing. Also, thorough tracking of survey returns will ensure minimal duplication of mailings.

Despite the fact that offset printing expenses will be greater than mimeograph printing, surveys and postcards should be printed professionally. The professional appearance of printed materials conveys the impor-

TABLE 1

ESTIMATED PRINTING AND MAILING COSTS FOR A SMALL SURVEY BOOKLET

(OPTION A)

MATERIALS	NUMBER	INDIVIDUAL COST	EXPLANATION	ESTIMATED COST
Initial Mailing				
Cover letter	953	*	Ohio Dominican Official Stationary	*
Surveys	953	.36		343.08
Return envelopes (no. 9)	953	.05	Business reply prnting cost special project address	47.65
Mailing envelopes	953	*	Ohio Dominican envelopes	*
First class postage	953	.22	1 oz. package	209.66
Return postage (survey)	477	.29		138.33
First Follow-up Mailing				
Post card	953	.03	Printing costs	28.59
First class postage	953	.14		133.42
Second Follow-up Mailing				
Cover letter	477**	*	Ohio Dominican Official Stationary	*
Surveys	477	.36		171.72
Return envelopes (no. 9)	477	.05	Business reply printing cost special project address	23.85
Mailing envelopes	477	*	Ohio Dominican envelopes	*
First class postage	477	.22	1 oz. package	104.94
Return postage	190	.29		55.10
			TOTAL	$1,256.34

NOTE:

The Option A Booklet is 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 inches

* = Materials Available through Ohio Dominican College

** = Estimated 50% of surveys will be returned from the initial mailing

TABLE 2

ESTIMATED PRINTING AND MAILING COSTS FOR A LARGE SURVEY BOOKLET

(OPTION B)

MATERIALS	NUMBER	INDIVIDUAL COST	EXPLANATION	ESTIMATED COST
Initial Mailing				
Cover letter	953	*	Ohio Dominican Official Stationary	*
Surveys	953	.63		600.39
Return envelopes (no. 9)	953	.05	Business reply prnting cost special project address	47.65
Mailing envelopes	953	*	Ohio Dominican envelopes	*
First class postage	953	.56	3 oz. package	533.68
Return postage (survey)	477	.63		300.51
First Follow-up Mailing				
Post card	953	.03	Printing costs	28.59
First class postage	953	.14		133.42
Second Follow-up Mailing				
Cover letter	477**	*	Ohio Dominican Official Stationary	*
Surveys	477	.63		300.51
Return envelopes (no. 9)	477	.05	Business reply printing cost special project address	23.85
Mailing envelopes	477	*	Ohio Dominican envelopes	*
First class postage	477	.56	3 oz. package	267.12
Return postage	190	.63		119.70
			TOTAL	$2,355.42

NOTE:

The Option B Booklet is 8 1/2 x 11 1/2 inches

* = Materials Available through Ohio Dominican College

** = Estimated 50% of surveys will be returned from the initial mailing

tance of the study and ensures that materials have a high quality appearance. Two estimates of costs associated with questionnaire and postcard printing and mailing are reported in Tables 1 and 2. Depending upon the preferred printing specifications, the approximate cost for materials using estimate A will be $1,256.34, and the costs for estimate B will be $2,355.42. These costs were derived from reasonable estimates for printing the materials in Columbus, Ohio. The two estimates represent different page sizes for the questionnaire, different point size, and different mailing costs associated with the two sizes of the questionnaire. Although estimate A is more economical than estimate B, the survey form associated with estimate B is larger and, therefore, more readable than that associated with estimate A.

In addition, variable costs exist in the form of salaries for individuals conducting the study and secretarial assistance, the rental of any needed equipment such as computers, and expenses for follow-up telephone calls to clarify information or answer questions from respondents. The approximate cost estimates provided for postage and printing are currently accurate but are subject to change by the time the study will be undertaken.

In partial summary, the Total Design Method (Dillman, 1978) recommended for conducting the survey affords a high probability of success for the survey of graduates. The costs associated with this procedure are intended to assure a professional study which will produce a high response rate. It is the opinion of the project directors that the benefits of the costs associated with such an undertaking significantly outweigh a more economical approach to implementing the study.

POSSIBLE USES OF INFORMATION FROM A STUDY OF GRADUATES

The data collected through the "Ohio Dominican College Graduate Survey" have the potential to provide valuable information to many segments of the Ohio Dominican College Community. The following are some of the potential uses and users of these data:

Users	Uses
1. Academic Deans and Director of Graduate Placement	- to examine academic areas which have been effective in placing students in jobs and graduate programs related to their field. - to work to improve College efforts in areas which appear to be less effective.
2. Dean of Admissions and Students and Members of the Student Affairs Staff	- to examine satisfaction levels with services provided. - to continue, by virtue of the above examination, to fund effective services and bolster or re-examine ineffective services. - to examine some characteristics of satisfied users and determine the need to expand marketing to better serve other populations.
3. Director of Admissions	- to develop recruiting strategies which focus upon aspects of the college which appeal to students (e.g., how graduates become prominent contributors to community, develop personal skills). - to develop strategies for recruitment and retention of specific populations (e.g., race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, academic area, state/national locale).

4. Planning and Budget Review	-	in conjunction with representatives of all constituencies, to determine how funds may be used more efficiently.
	-	to target specific alumni populations for future budgetary development.
	-	to examine physical plant usages/users and determine areas of potential need.
5. All Administrators	-	to continue to examine existing and future goals of individual offices to determine how well goals are being met and how well they relate back to the mission statement of Ohio Dominican College.

These are just some of the potential users and uses of information collected from the survey. Those persons more intimately familiar with the College's resources and internal workings of the college will be able to determine the most extensive and appropriate uses for the data.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the intent of this report is to provide a snapshot view of the process used to develop and test a survey of graduates of Ohio Dominican College. The actual activities of the Project Team were specified and analyzed more carefully than the activities of the majority of institutional research projects so that students could learn from their experiences of conceptualizing designs, conducting a survey, and reporting a research project.

The presence of the educational component has also served to reaffirm that high professional standards for the research were met. Therefore, the efforts to date should provide a sound foundation for undertaking a major survey of graduates. To this end, care has been taken to recommend a procedure for conducting such a study. Although the recommendation to survey 953 graduates is ambitious for a small liberal arts college, it is consistent with the high quality of effort and standards of performance demonstrated by the administrators and graduates of the Ohio Dominican College with whom the members of the Project Team worked.

It is the hope of the Project Team that the attached questionnaire and the plan for conducting a survey of graduates will mark the beginning of an expanded scientific effort for understanding the impact of Ohio Dominican College upon its students.

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PROJECT TEAM

Project Directors

Mary Ann D. Sagaria is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Policy and Leadership at The Ohio State University. She holds an Ed.D. in Higher Education and a B.A. in Political Science from the Pennsylvania State University, and an M.Ed. in Student Personnel from the University of Miami. Dr. Sagaria is the author of numerous articles and monographs on such topics as college students, administrators' career development, and academic women.

Philip E. Winger is currently a doctoral candidate in Educational Policy and Leadership at The Ohio State University. He is also in his fourth year as a staff member of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. He graduated from Westminster College (Missouri) in 1977 with Bachelors' degrees in Sociology and Psychology, and from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1979 with a Master's degree in Counseling and Personnel Services.

Survey Subcommittee

Sandra C. Burkhart completed her degree in Communications/Advertising and Public Relations with a minor in French at Bowling Green State University in 1984. She is currently the Community Life Associate in the Olentangy Area Support and Information Services Office at Ohio State University, while working toward her Master's degree in College Student Personnel.

Kathy J. Krajnak is currently a second-year Master's student in College Student Personnel, and holds an assistantship as the Learning Support Associate in the Olentangy Area Support and Information Services Office. She is a 1984 graduate of Miami University with a major in psychology.

Susan C. Pollack graduated from the University of Cincinnati in 1981 with a degree in French Studies and a minor concentration in Judaic Studies. She is presently a Master's student in the College Student Personnel program.

Teresa E. West is presently an assistant to the Coordinator of the Ohio State University Off-Campus Student Center. She is also a second-year Master's student in College Student Personnel. In 1984, Teresa completed her degree in Marketing and Public Administration, with a minor in Accounting, at Wilmington College.

Communications Subcommittee

Irene M. Mytro graduated from The Ohio State University in 1972 with a degree in Business Administration. She is presently a faculty member at Marion Technical Institute, while working toward her Master's degree in Adult Education with a minor concentration in Educational Administration.

Rodger C. Smith is currently the Coordinator for Student Programs at The Ohio State University Mansfield Campus, while working toward his Master's degree in Educational Administration with a minor concentration in Communication. He graduated with a Bachelor's degree in education from The Ohio State University in 1972.

Implementation Subcommittee

Gary Michael Timko graduated from The Ohio State University in 1984 with a degree in English Education. He is presently an Assistant Residence Hall Director and second-year Master's student in the College Student Personnel program at The Ohio State University.

Sharon D. Vaughters is presently a Student Personnel Assistant at The Ohio State University Counseling and Consultation Serves, while in her second year as a Master's student in College Student Personnel. She graduated from Ohio Wesleyan University in 1980 with a degree in Music and Pre-Music Therapy.

Drafting Subcommittee

Jay D. Chopp currently works as a Graduate Administrative Associate in The Ohio State University Office of Residence Life. He is also a second-year Master's student in College Student Personnel. In 1984, Jay completed his degree in Political Science with a minor in German at Marquette University.

Scott R. Horton graduated from James Madison University in 1984 with a degree in Management. He is a second-year Master's student in College Student Personnel, with an assistantship as the Assistant to the Coordinator of Greek Affairs at The Ohio State University.

Susan Konves graduated from Miami University in 1977 with a degree in mathematics. She completed her Master's degree in 1982, also at Miami University, in College Student Personnel. Susan is currently an Academic Advisor/Staff Assistant at The Ohio State University Mansfield Campus and is taking coursework to enhance her professional status and possibly, at some time, to pursue a terminal degree.

APPENDIX A

Management Plan

Survey Subcommittee

Study existing research and instrumentation
Study Ohio Dominican College literature
Analyze conversations with administrators
Initial drafts of the questions
Develop introduction to questions
Typing of draft
Initial draft of questionnaire
First pilot administration
Revision and retyping
Revision with entire class
Typing
Second pilot administration
Revision
Review and comments by Sister Suzanne Uhrhane and Mr. Sagona
Final survey revisions and typing

Communications Subcommittee

Obtain list of alumni for pilot studies
Arrange for administration of Pilot Study I
Administer Pilot Study I
Arrange for administration of Pilot Study II
Develop telephone script for Pilot Study II solicitation
Telephone prospective participants
Administer Pilot Study II
Convey feedback to Survey Subcommittee
Draft thank you notes to participants
Type and mail thank you notes
Deliver the revised survey to Sister Suzanne Uhrhane and Mr. Sagona

Implementation Subcommittee

Background work on survey research implementation
Discussions with Sr. Suzanne Uhrhane about possible sample
Recommendations for the sample
Recommendations for administration of the study
Costing of the project
First draft of implementation section of report
Revision of implementation section

Drafting Subcommittee

Develop purpose and organization of report
Create outline
Meet with other subcommittees to solicit input for report
First draft
Discussion of draft with project team
Further drafting and revising
Discussion of revisions with project team
Final revisions
Typing, copying, and binding

Miscellaneous

Revise management plan
Plan presentation
Presentation of final report

APPENDIX B

Final Draft of Survey

OHIO DOMINICAN SURVEY OF GRADUATES

We at Ohio Dominican College are concerned with providing a quality education and want to better understand how you feel about a wide variety of important issues concerning your undergraduate experience and your activities after college. You may be assured the confidentiality of your responses will be protected.

An important purpose of this study is to learn more about our graduates. We would like to begin by asking you a couple of questions about yourself.

Q-1 What year did you graduate? _____

Q-2 What was your major? _____

Q-3 Next, we would like to ask about your views about O.D.C. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements (circle one number for each item).

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
If given the chance to choose a college again, I would choose ODC.....	1	2	3	4
If I started college again, I would choose to graduate with the same major.....	1	2	3	4
I would recommend ODC to other college-bound students.....	1	2	3	4
ODC provides quality education.....	1	2	3	4
ODC fulfilled my academic expectations of what a college would be.....	1	2	3	4
I would be pleased to send my children to ODC.....	1	2	3	4
The ODC Viewbook and College Catalogue accurately represented the institution.....	1	2	3	4
I was satisfied with the personal attention received from faculty at ODC.....	1	2	3	4
I was satisfied with my social life at ODC.....	1	2	3	4
I was satisfied with the amount of financial aid I received at ODC.....	1	2	3	4
I believe ODC enhanced my religious development.....	1	2	3	4
I was pleased to be a student of a multicultural school.....	1	2	3	4
I believe that ODC enhanced my occupational success.....	1	2	3	4

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I value the liberal arts education I received at ODC.....	1	2	3	4
I have maintained contact with many of my friends from ODC.....	1	2	3	4
I am proud to be an alumnus of ODC.....	1	2	3	4

Q-4 Ohio Dominican offers a variety of services to students. Please indicate your satisfaction with services that you used as a student. If you were not aware of a service or it was not available while you were enrolled, please indicate by placing a check mark by the item.

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Did Not Use	
Admissions Office..	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Library.....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Academic Development Center.	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
International Student Services...	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Financial Aid Office.....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Career Information Center.....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Counseling and Testing Services...	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Student Health Center.....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Audiovisual Center (AVC).....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Campus Ministry....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Residence Halls....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Rathskellar Student Center.....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____

	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	Did Not Use	
Office of the Registrar.....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Honors Program.....	1	2	3	4	5	0	____
Academic Advising..	1	2	3	4	5	0	____

Q-5 ODC offers several organizations that function to serve the entire student body.

In your experience at ODC, did you participate in any Student Organization(s)? (Please circle)

1 No (Please continue to the question on the following page)
2 Yes

Please list the student organizations/activities in which you participated. Then indicate your level of satisfaction in each.

	Level of Satisfaction				
Activity	Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5

Q-6 College aids in the development of certain abilities, skills, and competencies. In the first column, please circle the number that represents the extent to which each item is desirable for success in your current endeavors. In column two please circle the number that represents how much your experience at Ohio Dominican College contributed to your success in each of the following areas.

	Desirable for Success in Your Current Endeavors			Contribution of ODC to Your Success in Current Endeavors		
	Very Little	Moderate	Very Much	Very Little	Moderate	Very Much
Writing effectively.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Ability to express ideas.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Speaking effectively.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Understanding written information.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Communicating to the public.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Ability to think critically and analytically.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Defining and solving problems.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Making logical decisions.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Formulating creative and original ideas.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Ability to market my skills and talents to potential employers.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Understanding world, social, political, and economic issues.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Understanding and applying mathematical principles.....	1	2	3	1	2	3

	Desirable for Success in Your Current Endeavors			Contribution of ODC to Your Success in Current Endeavors		
	Very Little	Moderate	Very Much	Very Little	Moderate	Very Much
Understanding the nature of science and experimentation.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Ability to use computers.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Knowldege of specifics in my major or professional field.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Understanding different philosophies and cultures.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Appreciation of individual differences.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Ability to interact with culturally different people.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Acquiring new skills and understanding on my own	1	2	3	1	2	3
Persistence at tasks.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Organizing time effectively.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Ability to function as a team member.....	1	2	3	1	2	3
Leading/guiding/ supervising others.....	1	2	3	1	2	3

Q-7 How much did your experience at Ohio Dominican contribute to your personal growth in the following areas:

	Very Little	Moderate	Very Much
Develop a personal understanding of the values in your life	1	2	3
Develop a personal philosophy by which to conduct your life	1	2	3
Develop an appreciation of differences among people	1	2	3
Develop a moral and ethical commitment	1	2	3
Develop ethical standards	1	2	3
Develop an awareness of different philosophies and ways of life	1	2	3
Develop the ability to cope with complex moral and ethical issues	1	2	3

Q-8 In your experience since graduating from Ohio Dominican College, approximately how often have your participated in each of the following activities. Indicate your response by circling the appropriate number.

	Never	Occasionally	Often	Very Often
Voted in elections	1	2	3	4
Participated in community government	1	2	3	4
Volunteered at community institutions	1	2	3	4
Read a book	1	2	3	4
Attended a concert	1	2	3	4
Went to the theater	1	2	3	4
Visited museums and art galleries	1	2	3	4
Contributed to charity/religious organizations	1	2	3	4
Signed a petition	1	2	3	4
Used a library	1	2	3	4

	Never	Occasionally	Often	Very Often
Visited an exhibition.....	1	2	3	4
Read a newspaper.....	1	2	3	4
Discussed current events.....	1	2	3	4
Attended religious services.....	1	2	3	4

Q-9 Next, we are interested in learning about your current activities and the role of the college in preparing you for your occupation. Please check the appropriate response.

Which of the following best describes what you are currently doing?

1 Employed full-time
2 Employed part-time
3 Self-employed
4 Serving in the armed forces
5 Continuing my education
6 Employed and continuing my education
7 Caring for a home/family
8 Unemployed
9 Other (please specify) _____

What is the name of your current place of employment?_____

_____

What is your current job title? _____

If you went from college directly into graduate school, please indicate the name of the institution and your major field of study in graduate school. _____

Please indicate the sources that helped you learn about your first job upon graduation from ODC or your selected graduate institution (circle all the appropriate items). Indicate the importance of the sources you circled by rank ordering them beginning with 1 as the most important.

1	College placement office	____
2	Faculty at college	____
3	An ODC graduate	____
4	Relative or friend	____
5	Newspaper/publication	____
6	Professional meeting	____
7	A friend	____
8	Recruited by employer	____
9	Employment agency	____
10	Other (please specify)_____	____

If you desired to directly enter the job market upon graduation from ODC, how long did it take you to obtain your first job (Circle one)?

1 Obtained job prior to leaving college
2 Less than one month after leaving college
3 1 to 3 months after leaving college
4 4 to 6 months after leaving college
5 7 to 12 months after leaving college
6 More than 12 months after leaving college
7 Not applicable

Circle the number of full-time jobs you have held since leaving Ohio Dominican (Circle one).

1
2
3
4
5 or more

How related is your college major to your current employment or advanced studies program (Circle one)?

1 Not related
2 Slightly related
3 Moderately related
4 Highly related

How satisfied are you with your present job (Circle one)?

1 Not satisfied
2 Somewhat satisfied
3 Satisfied
4 Very satisfied

How well did Ohio Dominican prepare you for your present occupation (Circle one)?

1 Poorly
2 Adequately
3 Well
4 Very well

Which aspect of your experience at Ohio Dominican was more influential in your choice of a career?

1 Academic studies
2 Extracurricular activities
3 College work experience
4 Other (please specify)_____

Q-10 Lastly, we are interested in some background information about you to assist us to interpret the results.

During your years at ODC, what was your marital status?

1 Single
2 Married
3 Member of Religious Community
4 Other (please specify)_____

What is your race or ethnic origin?

1 American Indian
2 Asian or Pacific Islands
3 Black
4 Hispanic
5 White
6 Other (please specify) _____

With which of the following organized religious denominations do you currently identify?

1 Baptist
2 Episcopal
3 Jewish
4 Lutheran
5 Methodist
6 Presbyterian
7 Roman Catholic
8 Other (please specify) _____
9 None

Age _____ Sex _____

Were you enrolled part-time _____
full-time _____
both _____

During years at ODC were you a:

1 resident student
2 commuting student
3 both (at some time during college)

Did you transfer to Ohio Dominican College?
1 No
2 Yes

How many years did you attend Ohio Dominican College?
1
2
3
4
5 or more

It has been impossible for us to address all issues and concerns regarding your experience at Ohio Dominican. In the space provided below, please comment upon any aspect of your experience at Ohio Dominican which you find important to share. We welcome your suggestions

Thank you for taking the time to make your views known.

Communication Committee
Interview Guide

REACTION SHEET

INTRODUCTION: We greatly appreciate your interrupting your busy schedule to assist us in developing an alumni survey. Now that your have completed this questionnaire, we would like to ask you about your reactions to it. Your comments are especially important so that we can improve the survey to best assess the alumni reaction to their undergraduate experiences.

Overall, what is your reaction to the survey? (Format, clarity of instructions, organization, appearance, length, sequence of questions.)

What questions are not clear?

Did you find any questions objectionable?

What other questions should we include?

What questions seemed irrelevant?

Were there questions that seemed biased or led you to a particular answer?

What should we do to have a high response rate from the alumni?

APPENDIX C

Telephone Solicitation Script

(used to solicit volunteers for pilot implementations)

Hello. I'm _____. I am part of an Ohio State University research group working on an Alumni Survey for Ohio Dominican College. The Ohio Dominican President's Office and Alumni Records Office have provided your name as part of a select group of fifteen Alumni to become members of a pilot study group on Alumni views of undergraduate educational experiences.

We are asking for one hour of you time to complete the survey and talk briefly to us about it. The time options would be Thursday, 7 to 8 p.m. or Saturday, 10 - 11 a.m., in St. Albert's Hall at the Ohio Dominican campus. Could we count on your participation? Please select a time now.

APPENDIX D

Thank You Letter to Pilot Study Participants

OSU

The Ohio State University

Department of
Educational Policy and Leadership
College of Education

121 Ramseyer Hall
29 West Woodruff Avenue
Columbus, Ohio 43210-1177

Phone 614-422-5181

August 1, 1985

Ms. Margie Bogenschutz
202 W. Lakeview
Columbus, OH 43202

Dear Ms. Bogenschutz:

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to assist us in developing a survey about graduates' perceptions of Ohio Dominican College. By completing the questionnaire and sharing your opinions about the study you have contributed to the quality of our effort to collect important information from alumni and alumna.

The results of our research are being made available to officials of O.D.C. These will enable them to undertake a large study to learn what kinds of experiences people like yourself have had at the College and how those experiences influence life after college. Information from the study will have important policy implications for enhancing the quality of education at Ohio Dominican.

We greatly appreciate your assistance.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann D. Sagaria
Project Director

MADS/kls

PROGRAM AREAS

Curriculum, Instruction and Development
121 Ramseyer Hall
614-422-5181

Educational Administration
301 Ramseyer Hall
614-422-7700

Higher Education, Student Affairs and Adult Education
301 Ramseyer Hall
614-422-7700

Humanistic Foundations
121 Ramseyer Hall
614-422-5181

Vocational-Technical Education
160 Ramseyer Hall
614-422-5037

APPENDIX E

Pilot Study Feedback Form

INTRODUCTION: We greatly appreciate your interrupting your busy schedule to assist us in developing an alumni survey. Now that you have completed this questionnaire, we would like to ask you about your reactions to it. Your comments are especially important so that we can improve the survey to best assess the alumni reaction to their undergraduate experiences.

Overall, what is your reaction to the survey? (Format, clarity of instructions, organization, appearance, length, sequence of questions).

What questions are not clear?

Did you find any questions objectionable?

What other questions should we include?

What questions seemed irrelevant?

Were there questions that seemed biased or led you to a particular answer?

What should we do to have a high response rate from the alumni?